

Background on the NAEP Assessment Schedule

October 2020

Setting the [NAEP Assessment Schedule](#) is one of the Governing Board's most important statutory responsibilities. Historically, the Governing Board has amended the NAEP Assessment Schedule to reflect legislative changes to NAEP's authorization, new opportunities, evolving expectations in what students should know and be able to do, and funding availability. According to the Board's [General Policy on Conducting and Reporting NAEP](#), the Board, "periodically establishes a dependable, publicly announced assessment schedule of at least ten years in scope. The schedule specifies the subject or topic (e.g., High School Transcript Study), grades, ages, assessment year, and sampling levels (i.e., national, state, TUDA) for each assessment." The current schedule of assessments (attached) extends through 2029.

The Board engaged in extensive discussions on the NAEP Assessment Schedule from 2017-2019, informed by a [Resolution on Board Priorities for the NAEP Assessment Schedule](#) (attached) adopted in March 2018. These priorities were frequency (administering all NAEP assessments at least every four years), efficiency (finding cost-effective ways to administer NAEP), and utility (including more state and urban district data to produce more actionable information).

The Board adopted a new Assessment Schedule in July 2019 that sought to balance the Board's priorities with considerable fiscal and operational constraints. At that time, four subjects were removed from the schedule, including three assessments that provided results only at the national level and were not administered frequently: Arts, Economics, and Geography. Foreign language had been scheduled, but never actually assessed operationally. The schedule includes updating assessment frameworks and increasing the availability of state-level results for some of the voluntary assessments beginning in 2027.

Implementation of the current NAEP Assessment Schedule is contingent on the NAEP program receiving additional funds, and the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2021 included a request for an additional \$28 million/year for NAEP. If this funding is not appropriated, then additional changes to the schedule will become necessary.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on the cost and operational feasibility of conducting NAEP. In July 2020, the Board adopted a revised NAEP Assessment Schedule (see attached) that postponed the Long-Term Trend assessment for 17-year-olds from 2020 to 2022 and the U.S. History and Civics assessments at grade 8 from 2021 to 2022. Over the past 6 months, the Board and NCES have been engaged in extensive discussions about plans for conducting the legislatively-mandated Reading and Mathematics assessments at grades 4 and 8 in 2021, including the possibility of seeking a waiver to postpone these assessments until 2022 if it is not operationally feasible to conduct the administration and produce results that meet NCES standards for reliability and validity. In July 2020, the Board adopted a [Resolution to Continue Preparations for 2021 NAEP Reading and Mathematics](#) (attached).